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ABSTRACT

Reported are data from the initial use of the Motivation Checklist, a rating scale for teachers designed to help them think about student motivation problems in terms of an extended, research-based typology. Over 50 teachers rated 261 students in grades one through six who differed in their level of motivation and in their level of achievement. Teachers also rated students' achievement in terms of percentile rank in the class. Factor analyses revealed that the instrument basically failed in its original goal of getting teachers to differentiate motivational problems. Apparently teachers used the Motivation Checklist in a way that confirmed researchers' initial impressions that teachers simply categorized students as either good or bad. Students' scores on subscales were inspected to investigate the relationship between teachers' perceptions of student motivation and students' perceptions of why they do their schoolwork. Two 5th-grade teachers used the checklist to rate 56 students in typical performance-oriented mathematics classes. Students completed Harter's Perceived Scholastic Competence Scale, Buhrmester's School Concerns Scale, and a new motivation scale developed by Harter which allows assessment of several sources of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Findings indicated that students whom teachers thought of as good claimed they worked to escape parental disapproval, while students thought of as bad claimed that when they worked, they did so because they found the task interesting. Results are discussed and the checklist and its subscales are appended. (RH)

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' RATINGS AND STUDENTS' SELF-REPORTED MOTIVATION

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UCLA

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Last year Deborah Stipek, Denise Daniels, and I spent time working with teachers in elementary school classes. We were there to learn about the motivational problems teachers encountered and to act as resources for the teachers. The first thing we learned was that we looked at student motivational problems very differently from the way teachers looked at them. While we catagorized children in terms of theoretical constructs in the motivational literature--such as learned helpless, failure avoiding, extrinsically motivated, intrinsically motivated, and so on--teachers saw essentially two kinds of students--students who worked hard, performed well, and liked school, and students who did not work hard, did not perform well, and did not like school. Students who were not working were described by some teachers simply as "lazy". We came to the conclusion that teachers who did not make more differentiated diagnoses than many of our teachers made were not likely to be able to select effective interventions to alleviate their students' motivational problems.

In an attempt to help teachers become better diagnosticians we developed the Motivation Checklist we are presenting to you today. The behaviors included on this checklist are derived from the various motivational patterns described in the psychological and educational literature and from our own observations of children in classrooms. We hoped that by asking teachers to rate very specific behaviors, they would think about student motivation problems in more differentiated ways. We also hoped that this process would call teachers' attention to motivation problems that sometimes exist among students who are performing well--such as an inability to accept less than perfect performance or a reluctance to approach tasks in which initial success is not assured.

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I will report to you today data from our initial attempt to use this Motivation Checklist. Because a careful diagnosis of motivation problems requires some knowledge of a students' own perceptions, we also gathered data on students' evaluations of their scholastic competence, anxiety, and motivational-orientation.

The first item in the handout is a copy of our Motivation Checklist. Five of the items on this list were not included in the original. The second handout organizes the checklist items according to our own predetermined categories of motivational orientation. There are seven categories. Since the categories are based on the major theoretical and empirical work in the motivational literature, I will not go into their explanation here. Instead, I will go on to the method we used to gather our data.

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Over 50 teachers completed our checklist for a subgroup of students in their classrooms. Teachers were asked to rate several children who differed in their level of motivation and in their level of achievement. A total of 261 students in grades one through six were rated. Teachers also rated students' achievement in terms of their percentile rank in the classroom.

Factor analyses revealed that we basically failed at our original goal of getting teachers to differentiate motivational problems. A large first factor emerged which accounted for over 44% of the variance in teachers' ratings of student behavior. Apparently, teachers responded to our Motivation Checklist in a way that confirmed our initial impression--that is, teachers divide students into the two categories I described earlier--good students and bad students.

Nevertheless, we moved on to look at the theoretically derived subcategories of items. As you can see from the second item in the handout, with the exception of the anxiety scale, the reliabilities for the subscales are respectable (i.e., the items hang together). But keep in mind that the intercorrelations among the subscales we created are moderately high.

We used students' scores on these subscales to look at the relationship between teachers' perceptions of students' motivation and students' own perceptions of why they do their schoolwork. Two fifth grade teachers rated all of their students in typical performance-oriented math classes. Their 56 students completed Harter's Perceived Scholastic Competence Scale, Buhrmester's School Concerns Scale (as a measure of anxiety), and a new motivation scale developed by Harter. All questions on these measures were worded to be specific to math. The new Harter motivation scale allows one to assess several sources of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, separately. We created four subscales from the items on this instrument. The first subscale assessed **intrinsic** motivation as a reason for doing schoolwork (e.g., "I do my math schoolwork because I enjoy figuring out problems"). The remaining three subscales concerned **extrinsic** sources of motivation: (1) classroom rewards (e.g., "I do my math schoolwork because I'll get a good grade if I do"); (2) positive social rewards (e.g., "...because my parents will be pleased with me if I do"), and (3) negative parent response (e.g., "... because I'll get in trouble with my parents if I don't").

Our questions were straightforward. Are students' perceptions of their own academic competence related to teachers' observations of students' behavior? Do the students who teachers' describe as anxious claim to be anxious themselves? And finally, do the students teachers describe as intrinsically or extrinsically motivated claim to be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, respectively?

The correlation coefficients presented in Table 1 reveal some interesting differences between teachers' and students' perceptions of students and of why students do their schoolwork.

Children's perceptions of their competence in math were associated only with teachers' perceptions of students' anxiety. Students who perceive themselves to be relatively competent were described by teachers as relatively low in anxiety-related behaviors but were not necessarily the students performing at high levels.

The four indices of student's motivational-orientation reflect students' overall level of motivation as well as the relative importance of one reason for working compared with others. Because we were interested in the **relative** importance of different reasons for working on school tasks, we partialed students' total extrinsic motivation score from their intrinsic motivation score and their intrinsic motivation score from each of their extrinsic motivation scores. This partialing procedure provided us with the following indices: (1) motivation to do schoolwork for intrinsic reasons, holding extrinsic motivation constant (Intrinsic:Extrinsic); (2) motivation to work for classroom rewards, holding intrinsic motivation constant (Classroom Rewards:Intrinsic); (3) motivation to work for positive social rewards, holding intrinsic motivation constant (Positive Social:Intrinsic); and (4) motivation to work to avoid parental disapproval, holding intrinsic motivation constant (Parent Negative:Intrinsic).

The partial correlations in Table 1 show clear relations between students' **extrinsic** motivational orientation and teachers' perception of **positive** classroom behavior. Students who reported that they do their schoolwork primarily for **extrinsic** rather than **intrinsic** reasons were seen by teachers as the top performers. More specifically, at any level of **intrinsic** motivation, the student who reported HIGHER **extrinsic** motivation was the HIGHER performer, seen by his/her teacher as more interested in schoolwork. At any level of **extrinsic** motivation, the student who reported HIGHER **intrinsic** motivation was perceived as more disrespectful and hostile toward teachers and school (i.e., alienated).

In short, teachers belived that the "good students", i.e., those who worked hard and did well, worked because they enjoyed schoolwork. These same good students claimed that they were actually working to escape parental disapproval, NOT because they were intrinsically interested in the work. Teachers believed that the "bad students," i.e., those who did not work and did poorly, were NOT interested in learning and when they did work it was only to stay out of trouble or to receive a reward. But these same students claimed that they were relatively unmotivated by extrinsic rewards or to avoid punishment; when they did work (which apparently was not often) it was because they found the task interesting.

These preliminary data raise interesting questions about the meaning of intrinsic versus extrinsic motivational orientations within the classroom. Why would good rather than poor students rate extrinsic incentives as important reasons for doing

schoolwork? Why would students who claim that interest and challenge are important reasons to do schoolwork be seen by teachers as poor performers with negative attitudes toward school?

We feel that the answer to these questions lies in the performance oriented nature of the classrooms we observed. The teachers in these classes, as in many traditional classrooms, relied primarily on extrinsic incentives to motivate students to "perform." Testing and evaluation dominated students' daily activities. Teachers rarely attempted to provide inherently meaningful tasks, tasks that challenged individual students' ability, or task that promoted learning rather than emphasized performance. It is not surprising that students who claimed to work for extrinsic reasons fared well in these classrooms. They were willing to work on tasks they found relatively uninteresting or unchallenging in order to avoid undesirable consequences or obtain desirable rewards. The fact that many top performers in the classes we observed did their schoolwork without any real interest or challenge is captured in the comments of one high achieving student talking about herself and a friend. "We hate school. Especially math! School use to be fun. Like in the 3rd grade. We use to do stuff. Like projects and take field trips and stuff. Now all we ever do is read out of the book and take tests. It's really boring! The BEST part of school is recess!" Students in the classes we observed who were NOT motivated by extrinsic incentives, fared poorly. They either did not value or did not expect the extrinsic consequences (e.g., they did not EXPECT to get a good grade anyway) and were rarely given alternative reasons for doing their work (e.g., interesting tasks).

In thinking about these data, we wondered whether the students who claimed that when they worked they workded because they were interested in the task might fare better in classrooms in which students are given some autonomy to choose tasks and in which the teacher makes an effort to make tasks meaningful. We also wondered whether the students who worked hard to obtain good grades and avoid parental disapproval would continue to work as hard in a classroom that de-emphasized grades.

We plan to pursue the questions of fit between student and teacher motivational orientation, and to pursue our goal of helping teachers differentiate students' motivational problems. Next time we ask teachers to complete our checklist we will first engage them in active discussions about different kinds of motivational problems that may occur in the classroom. Eventually we hope to demonstrate to our teachers that careful observations of students' behavior, combined with information on the students' own perceptions, can help them identify the causes of motivation problems. Identifying causes of motivational problems will help them determine effective strategies for remedying those problems.

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Table 1

Correlations and partial correlations
between teachers' ratings of student behavior
and students' self-perceptions

Teacher Ratings	Student Self-Perception Measure					
	Perceived Competence	Anxiety	#Intrinsic: Extrinsic	Classroom Rewards: Intrinsic	Social Reward: Intrinsic	Parent Negative: Intrinsic
Performance	.19	.08	-.05	.27*	.35*	.32*
Anxious	-.27*	.00	-.07	-.13	-.55**	-.42**
Intrinsic	.07	.24	-.04	.26	.22	.40**
Extrinsic	-.08	-.06	.25	-.32*	-.28*	-.14
Alienated	.23	-.16	.45**	-.39**	-.32*	-.35**
Self-Protective	-.09	-.05	.20	-.29**	-.38**	-.32*
Learned Helpless	-.19	-.11	.12	-.14	-.33*	-.13

** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$

Intrinsic: holding average score on extrinsic subscales constant.

MOTIVATION CHECKLIST

Instructions: Please answer all questions for each child. Check the category that best describes the child's behavior on academic tasks.

_____ (first name of child)	not at all true	not very true	somewhat true	mostly true	very true
1. doesn't complete class assignments	___	___	___	___	___
2. enjoys work that is challenging	___	___	___	___	___
3. performs less well on tests than on assignments	___	___	___	___	___
4. is reluctant to try again after intitial failure	___	___	___	___	___
5. asks questions to expand knowledge beyond immediate lesson	___	___	___	___	___
6. is nervous in evaluative situations	___	___	___	___	___
7. sits at his/her desk doing nothing	___	___	___	___	___
8. tries hard only when being tested or graded	___	___	___	___	___
9. is reluctant to stop working on tasks when highly engaged	___	___	___	___	___
10. usually gets 100% correct on assignments	___	___	___	___	___
11. is disrespectful of teachers & school rules	___	___	___	___	___
12. makes excuses for poor work	___	___	___	___	___
13. likes structured work where there is only one way to do it right	___	___	___	___	___
14. avoids tasks where he/she might not initially succeed	___	___	___	___	___
15. doesn't follow directions	___	___	___	___	___

X18DS/L

	not at all true	not very true	somewhat true	mostly true	very true
16. works primarily to avoid punishment	___	___	___	___	___
17. expresses hostility towards school	___	___	___	___	___
18. gets good grades without working very hard	___	___	___	___	___
19. is a "self-starter" who prefers initiating his/her own school activities to working on teacher selected tasks	___	___	___	___	___
20. doesn't pay attention to lessons	___	___	___	___	___
21. expresses negative attitudes towards learning activities (e.g., "This assignment yucky.")	___	___	___	___	___
22. finishes work early	___	___	___	___	___
23. pursues out-of-classroom interests in intellectual activities (e.g., computers, reading)	___	___	___	___	___
24. will only work for a reward (something extra, like a special privilege)	___	___	___	___	___
25. uses expressions like "I can't and I don't know how."	___	___	___	___	___
26. frequently gets into mischief	___	___	___	___	___
27. asks teacher or peers for answers	___	___	___	___	___
28. works only with close teacher supervision	___	___	___	___	___
29. looks busy without actually working on assignments	___	___	___	___	___
30. procrastinates in starting assignments	___	___	___	___	___

X18DS/L

	not at all true	not very true	somewhat true	mostly true	very true
31. masters the curriculum before the rest of class	___	___	___	___	___
32. worries about tests	___	___	___	___	___
33. is careless with school materials (e.g., text books)	___	___	___	___	___
34. is not interested in learning anything that is not required	___	___	___	___	___
35. always knows the right answer when called on	___	___	___	___	___
36. is uncomfortable talking in front of the class	___	___	___	___	___

Child's sex: girl ___ boy ___

Child's grade in school: _____

Child's age: ___

Please rate the child's academic ability, that is, what he or she is capable of with maximum effort relative to other children you have now or have had in the same grade:

top 10%	___	41-50%	___	71-80%	___
11-20%	___	51-60%	___	81-90%	___
21-30%	___	61-70%	___	Bottom 10%	___
31-40%	___				

Please rate the child's actual academic performance, that is, how well he or she is actually performing on academic tasks relative to other children you have now or have had in the same grade:

top 10%	___	41-50%	___	71-80%	___
11-20%	___	51-60%	___	81-90%	___
21-30%	___	61-70%	___	Bottom 10%	___
31-40%	___				

MOTIVATION CHECKLIST SUBSCALES
(Five point rating scale)

INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED

RELIABILITY = .88 Mean = 2.80 SD = 1.11

2. enjoys work that is challenging
5. asks questions to expand knowledge beyond immediate lesson
9. is reluctant to stop working on tasks when highly engaged
19. is a "self-starter" who prefers initiating own activities
23. pursues out-of-classroom interests in intellectual activities

SELF-PROTECTIVE

REALIABILITY = .88 Mean = 2.47 SD = 1.09

12. makes excuses for poor work
15. doesn't follow directions
20. doesn't pay attention
29. looks busy without actually working on assignments
30. procrastinates in starting assignments

ALIENATED

RELIABILITY = .89 Mean = 1.96 SD = 1.01

11. is disrespectful of teachers and school rules
17. expresses hostility toward school
21. expresses negative attitudes toward learning activities
26. frequently gets into mischief
33. is careless with school materials (e.g. textbooks)
(not originally included)

X18DS/M

EXTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED

RELIABILITY = .79 Mean = 2.09 SD = .86

8. tries hard only when being tested or graded
16. works primarily to avoid punishment
24. will only work for a reward (extra privilege)
28. works only with close teacher supervision
34. not interested in learning anything that is not required (not originally included)

HELPLESS

RELIABILITY = .85 Mean = 2.43 SD = 1.00

1. doesn't complete class assignments
4. is reluctant to try again after initial failure
7. sits at his/her desk doing nothing
25. uses expressions like, "I can't, I don't know how."
27. asks teacher or peers for answers

UNCHALLENGED

RELIABILITY = .82 Mean = 2.68 SD = 1.08

10. usually gets 100% correct on assignments
18. gets good grades without working very hard
22. finishes work early
35. always knows the right answer when called on (not originally included)
31. masters the curriculum before the rest of the class (not originally included)

ANXIOUS

RELIABILITY = .65 Mean = 2.60 SD = .75

3. performs less well on tests than on assignments
6. is nervous in evaluative situations
13. likes structured work where there is only one way to do it
14. avoids tasks where might not initially succeed
32. worries about tests (not originally included)
36. uncomfortable talking in front of class (not originally included)